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LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1999 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I am enclosing herewith some information regarding the civilian destruction in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia caused by the barbaric and criminal aggression of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) against my country (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Civilian destruction in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 24 March to 1 April 1999, as a result of the barbaric and criminal NATO aggression

From the outset of NATO aggression against our country through 1 April 1999, the North Atlantic Alliance committed more than 1,000 criminal attacks in the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in which tens of thousands of homes and other civilian facilities were damaged. Dozens of civilians were killed and over a thousand sustained serious or light injuries.

During the NATO aggression, civilian targets most frequently came under attack. The missiles hit factories, apartment blocks, hospitals and health institutions, schools, day-care centres, old people's homes and sports facilities. Particularly extensive damage was done to cultural and historical monuments as well as to religious establishments throughout the country. Medieval monasteries of Gracanica and Rakovica and a church in Jelasnica, near Surdulica, were badly damaged. As is known and has been so convincingly confirmed to the international public by the renowned scientist Weber, Kosovo and Metohija are the areas with the largest concentration of Serbian medieval cultural sites of inestimable value, including those under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) protection (Gracanica). The targets of attacks were also water supply systems, and the electrical grid, as well as other facilities serving to cater for the needs of the population.

The attacks also targeted hospitals and other health institutions attending to the civilians (a hospital and a medical centre in the Leskovac area; the Nis hospital; a polyclinic in Nis; the gerontological centre in Leskovac, the General Hospital in Djakovica etc.). The attacks did not even spare schools and day-care facilities for children (primary school "16 October" and primary school "Vladimir Rolovic" in Belgrade; a kindergarten in the Petlovo Brdo suburb of Belgrade; two secondary schools in the Nis area; primary school "Toza Markovic" in Novi Sad; and four primary schools and a secondary medical school in the Leskovac area; as well as a larger number of schools in the region of Kosovo and Metohija). Over a hundred pre-school institutions and schools were damaged in NATO actions. As a result of the aggression, schools and universities were closed. The warehouses storing liquid chemicals and raw materials for the chemical industry were hit in Pancevo, in Novi Sad and in other towns, thus causing huge contamination of soil and air. Thousands of citizens were exposed to poison gases that might have a lasting effect on the health of people and the environment.

Attacks of NATO forces, unequivocally, serve the purpose of Albanian terrorists and separatists, as proved by repeated attacks against a large number of civilian targets and towns and villages predominantly populated by Serbs (Gracanica, Kosovo Polje, Koritiste and Vrbovci near Gnjilane, Bjelo Polje near Pec etc.). However, the missile attacks against the towns and villages in Kosovo and Metohija have brought about large-scale destruction, caused fear and panic among the population, whatever their ethnicity. Thousands of civilians,

women, children and elderly and infirm people, in fear of the aggressor's bombs, were forced to leave Kosovo and Metohija, which means that NATO forces have provoked a large humanitarian catastrophe. The towns and villages in Kosovo and Metohija and beyond have been without electricity and water for days now, and provision of staple foods has been considerably slowed by NATO aggression. The devastation of dwellings by NATO forces has been by far the greatest in Pristina, Novi Sad, Djakovica, Prokuplje, Gracanica etc. The civilian establishments in the neighbourhoods of Kijevo-Knezevac, Batajnica, Jakovo, Borca on the outskirts of Belgrade and around Pancevo also came under attack.

The aggressor's targets included factories and business facilities manufacturing household appliances and catering for every day needs of the population (Tubes factory in Urosevac, "Utva" in Pancevo, "Sloboda" Cacak producing vacuum cleaners and cookers), and the agricultural-industrial complex "Mladost" in Gnjilane etc. and television centres (radio and TV centre in Pristina) which are located in densely populated residential areas, transport companies ("Kosmet prevoz" in Gnjilane) and a hydro-meteorological station (Bukulja near Arandjelovac) were directly hit. Total destruction of these facilities has left hundreds of thousands of people without jobs since this was the only source of income for them and their families. For example, by destroying the factory "Sloboda" Cacak, 5,000 persons were left jobless while 20,000 of their dependants were without any means of subsistence.

Infrastructure has also been extensively damaged: roads, the railway network, energy production systems and telecommunications.

The aggressor also attacked roads, like the Belgrade-Zagreb motorway near Stari Banovci, and the Kraljevo-Kosovo Polje railway near Ibarska Slatina, as well as the bridge over the Sava river in Novi Sad, which connected this town with Petrovaradin, leaving Novi Sad and Petrovaradin residents without water (600,000 residents; in the entire country, a million people were left without water), since the main and city water supply system was built in the bridge. The destruction of the bridge has discontinued international river navigation on the Danube River connecting the Black Sea to the Baltic Sea. It is indicative that they have chosen this time to attack when a lot of people start going to work and mothers are taking their children to day-care centres and the traffic is rather heavy then.

NATO forces in these attacks used weapons and other means of destruction that are prohibited in accordance with the international conventions (cluster bombs have been used in the attacks on Gracanica, Pristina and its neighbourhood, Lukare village, Grmija, Gnjilane, villages of Vrbovac and Mogila near Kosovska Vitina, Koritiste near Gnjilane, Nis Airport, Sombor Airport, downtown Prizren etc.). They also used NATO slow activating bombs to destroy civilian targets. In addition, it was noted that radio locators have been used. Those have been thrown from the NATO planes on the eve of the attack and before that. They were placed in the vicinity of civilian targets and at some traffic communication lines (on both sides of the bridge in Cuprija) and water supply systems (dam of the Garasko jezero near Arandjelovac). Moreover, it was established that before leaving the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission members also engaged in placement of radio locators.

Fierce air strikes caused a lot of fires, which have been taken out thanks to timely and efficient intervention of fire brigades, but they caused extensive damage.

In addition to the above consequences (killed and wounded civilians and enormous material damage), the international public should be warned that the health of a huge number of civilians has been endangered, including women, the elderly, the sick, children who for eight days now spend days and nights in the shelters. Refugee centres in Nis and Pristina also came under attack, killing 15 refugees.

On the basis of the latest investigations and a large number of commissions assessing the damage, it can be said that at the present moment it amounts to several billion United States dollars (the activities to estimate the losses are under way). It is contemplated that other consequences that are even more dreadful (stress, health risks, lack of elementary conditions for normal life and supply of citizens etc.) are of huge proportions.

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LETTER DATED 4 APRIL 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have been instructed by my Government to inform you that the Stabilization Force (SFOR) dynamited the section of the Belgrade-Bar railroad passing through the territory of Republika Srpska near the station of Strpci. A railroad guard was killed on that occasion.

Bearing in mind that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a signatory party and guarantor of the Dayton Agreement, I have the honour to transmit the request of my Government that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convened to condemn most strongly the instrumentalization of SFOR in the aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The SFOR action is an unprovoked criminal act in which one civilian life was lost. The act represents a serious destabilization of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and further proof that SFOR continues to behave as an occupying Power and an extension of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the region. It is also contrary to the provisions of the Dayton Agreement, which was endorsed by the Security Council. Exceeding its authority and abusing its presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, SFOR has transformed itself from a guarantor of peace into a force spreading conflict in the region.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reiterates its request that the Security Council condemn the NATO aggression on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the continuation of which aggravates the situation in the region.

I would be very grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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